

Message Text

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, UNGA, MY

SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER RITHAUDDEEN'S DISCUSSION WITH
DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS

1. FOREIGN MINISTER RITHAUDDEEN MET FOR HALF HOUR
SEPTEMBER 21 WITH UNDER SECRETARY HABIB. AMBASSADOR ZAIN
AND ASSISTANT SECRETARY HUMMEL ALSO PRESENT. SUMMARY OF
CONVERSATION FOLLOWS.

2. AFTER OPENING PLEASANTRIES, FOREIGN MINISTER BRIEFLY
DESCRIBED CURRENT STATUS OF MALAYSIAN INSURGENCY AND THAI
BORDER PROBLEM. HE PORTRAYED SITUATION AS ONE OF CONCERN
TO GOM ALTHOUGH BELOW LEVEL OF ACTUAL THREAT TO GOVERNMENT.
HE TERMED THAI BORDER SITUATION "RATHER DANGEROUS" SINCE
WITHDRAWAL OF MALAYSIAN POLICE FIELD FORCE FROM BETONG,

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SAYING THAI LACKED CAPABILITY (ESPECIALLY IN INTELLIGENCE)

TO HANDLE INSURGENTS. HE STRESSED THAT WITHDRAWAL OF PFF HAD BEEN REQUESTED BY THAI AS UNILATERAL ACT WITHOUT PRIOR DISCUSSION. PRESENT STATE OF MALAYSIAN-THAI NEGOTIATIONS ON BORDER SECURITY, ACCORDING TO RITHAUDDEEN, WAS ONE OF PROPOSALS AND COUNTER-PROPOSALS WHICH BOTH SIDES WERE NOW STUDYING. HE SAW NO EVIDENCE ARMS FROM VIETNAM WERE REACHING INSURGENTS, ALTHOUGH HE NOTED THAT LATTER HAD PROCURED SOME M-16S FROM COMMERCIAL PURCHASE OF STOCKS STOLEN FROM THAI ARMED FORCES.

2. DISCUSSING ZONE OF PEACE, FREEDOM AND NEUTRALITY (ZPFN), RITHAUDDEEN POINTED OUT THAT IT WAS MEANT TO APPLY NOT TO ASEAN COUNTRIES ALONE BUT TO ALL SOUTHEAST ASIA. HABIB COMMENTED THAT WE HAD RESERVATIONS ABOUT SWEEPING CONCEPTS OF THIS NATURE BASED ON PRACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS, BUT THAT WE UNDERSTOOD MALAYSIA'S INTEREST IN IT.

3. RITHAUDDEEN EXPRESSED SELF AS GENERALLY SATISFIED WITH PROGRESS OF ASEAN TO DATE. HE AGREED WITH HABIB COMMENT THAT CHINA SEEMED MORE FAVORABLY INCLINED TOWARD ASEAN THAN VIETNAM, SEEING IT AS MEANS OF MINIMIZING SOVIET INFLUENCE IN AREA. HE NOTED IN THIS CONNECTION THAT THERE HAD BEEN SPECULATION AT COLOMBO THAT SOVIETS MIGHT HAVE BEEN BEHIND LAO-VIETNAMESE OPPOSITION TO ASEAN-SPONSORED ZPFN ITEM.

4. ON ECONOMIC ISSUES, RITHAUDDEEN EXPRESSED PLEASURE THAT USG HAD JOINED TIN AGREEMENT. HABIB SAID THAT USG FAVORED COMMODITY AGREEMENTS WHICH MADE PRACTICAL SENSE, WHILE RESISTING GLOBAL GENERALITIES.

5. MEETING WAS FOLLOWED DIRECTLY BY LUNCHEON HOSTED BY UNDER SECRETARY IN HONOR OF FOREIGN MINISTER. LUNCHEON WAS ATTENDED BY ACTING SECRETARY ROBINSON AS WELL AS REPRESENTATIVES OF DOD AND NSC. ACTING SECRETARY OUTLINED IN SOME DETAIL U.S. VIEWS ON COMMODITY PRICE STABILIZATION MEASURES. HE EXPLAINED THAT USG WAS PREPARED TO SUPPORT PROPOSALS FOR INDIVIDUAL COMMODITY BUFFER STOCKS AND OTHER REASONABLE MEANS TO PREVENT DISRUPTIVE PRICE FLUCTUATIONS, NOTING IN THIS CONNECTION THAT POSSIBILITY OF USING PART OF USG TIN STOCKPILE AS CONTRIBUTION TO TIN AGREEMENT

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BUFFER STOCKS WAS UNDER STUDY. THIS WAS MAJOR STEP FORWARD FOR U.S., ACTING SECRETARY STRESSED, AS WAS WILLINGNESS TO ACCEPT CONCEPT OF LINKAGE. WHAT USG COULD NOT ACCEPT WAS CREATION OF CENTRALLY DIRECTED ENTITY TO MANAGE WORLD TRADE IN COMMODITIES, DICTATING HOW MUCH WAS TO BE PRODUCED AT WHAT PRICE AND WHO WOULD PRODUCE IT.

6. DISCUSSING FORTHCOMING UNGA, UNDER SECRETARY HABIB

OBSERVED THAT SECRETARY'S SCHEDULE FOR BILATERAL NEW YORK MEETINGS WITH FOREIGN MINISTERS HAD BEEN GREATLY DISRUPTED BY AFRICAN TRIP AND THAT SECRETARY, AS CONSEQUENCE, WOULD BE UNABLE TO SEE NUMBER OF FOREIGN MINISTERS HE HAD HOPED TO MEET WITH.

7. LUNCHEON CONVERSATION CONCLUDED WITH DISCUSSION OF POST-MAO CHINA, BOTH SIDES STRESSING UNCERTAINTY OF SITUATION AND TENTATIVE NATURE OF THEIR CONCLUSIONS.

8. AMBASSADOR ZAIN GAVE SMALL DINNER PARTY FOR FOREIGN MINISTER EVENING SEPTEMBER 21, WITH HABIB, HUMMEL AND SEVERAL ASEAN COUNTRY CHIEFS OF MISSION AS GUESTS. FOREIGN MINISTER ALSO HAD OPPORTUNITY VISIT AIR AND SPACE MUSEUM, MOUNT VERNON AND OTHER TOURIST ATTRACTIONS. IMPRESSION WE GATHERED FROM MALAYSIANS HERE IS THAT HE WAS PLEASED WITH BOTH SUBSTANCE OF DISCUSSIONS AND ATTENTION HE RECEIVED. HE LEFT FOR NEW YORK AFTERNOON SEPTEMBER 22. KISSINGER

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